



HOW TO PRESERVE FELLOWSHIP AND
RIGHT UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES



By

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OR more than half a century there was nothing but good-will and friendship between Japan and the United States. But for ten years there has been growing up in each land a small body of men who have felt and fomented distrust and there have been times when these men were able to communicate their distrust so that larger sections of the press and many of the people began to fear that the two nations might even drift into war against all their best interests and true desires. And there are some who still fear that this may happen. How can it be prevented? And how can we preserve fellowship and right understanding between the United States and Japan?

1. By resolutely determining both in Japan and in the United States that we will preserve it and that we will keep our heads and not be intimidated or coerced by any circumstances. There are some who declare that destiny will bring on a conflict between the two nations. This was what Mr. Mann asserted in Congress:—

“I have no doubt that a conflict will come between the Far East and the Far West across the Pacific Ocean. All which is taking place in the world, the logic of the history of the human race up to now, teaches us that the avoidance of this conflict is impossible. I hope it will be only a com-

mercial conflict. I hope war may not come, that there will be no conflict of arms, but I have little faith that in this world of ours, people and races are able to meet in competition for a long period without armed conflict. A fight for commercial supremacy leads in the end to a fight with arms, because that is the final arbiter between nations."

Destiny will set us at each other's throats! But what is destiny? Is it the God of peace who made us one blood and one family to live as brothers on the earth? Is it our own wills? Well, why do we need to surrender to our own deeds? Why not will that we will not drift into the madness of hate and war? We do not need to be slaves to our own stupidity. We can will to be rational and to deal justly and to preserve friendship. The Japanese also can do this. We can tell each other and all the marplots and weak-wills who think that men can't restrain their injustice, that we mean to have peace.

2. By believing good about each other and not evil. We can begin by believing that the honest and earnest people of each land want only peace and friendship, and by saying both in Japan and in the United States that we believe this. Judge Elbert H. Gary, who was in Japan in the autumn of 1916 was a true messenger there and is a true messenger here. Reporting his trip at St. Louis in October he said:

"I said repeatedly (in Japan), on my own responsibility, making no claim except that I believe I could accurately represent public sentiment, that a large majority of the people of the United States did not desire, but would deplore and stubbornly oppose, war with Japan, except in self-defense, and that they were of the opinion there is not now nor will be any cause for serious trouble or disagreement; that there need be no conflict of opinion which could not be finally and satisfactorily settled by mutual negotiation and consideration. I also expressed the belief that our

Governmental Administration is and would be inclined toward this most desirable exercise of authority. To all this I am sure this large company of representative business men will heartily subscribe. I would repeat and emphasize the sentiments thus expressed.

"And now, gentlemen, I am here to say to you in words just as emphatic and in a belief no less absolute that the leading and controlling men of Japan are equally anxious to have a continuance, permanently, of the peaceable and friendly relations now existing between these two countries. That there may be exceptions may go without saying; it would be usual, and need excite no surprise nor fear if such is the fact. Still, I have no positive information on which to base this conjecture. I had good opportunity to ascertain the real situation, though my visit to Japan was comparatively short.

"The most prominent and influential men in Japan are outspoken in their profession of friendship toward the United States."

This is the way all responsible men would talk about our relations to Japan.

3. By acting justly in each land toward citizens of the other, the Japanese treating Americans justly in Japan and Americans treating Japanese justly in America. At the present the latter half of this prescription is our prescription. All we need to do is to do right. And we need to do right for our own sake. It will profit us nothing to try to benefit ourselves by wrong-doing. It cannot be done. What is right is a question to be considered calmly and without prejudice, but the problem of the rights of Japanese in California to own property, their right to acquire citizenship, their right of justly regulated admission to the United States, is a problem to be considered without racial prejudice or bigotry and on the basis of moral and economic justice to both Japanese and Americans.

4. By judging each other as we ourselves are willing

to be judged. The trouble is that countless people apply one standard to themselves and to their own actions and another standard to the Orient. Conduct which we justify or excuse in a Western nation we reprehend in an Eastern. But there are not two moral laws, one east and the other west of Suez. We cannot escape the duty of judging national conduct, but Japanese and American conduct should be judged by the same laws and whatever allowances we expect for ourselves we should concede for others.

5. By each crediting the best in the other. We are accustomed to live up to other people's expectation of us. If they believe the highest of us we are uplifted to justify their judgment. If they think meanly of us we can too easily drop down to the level of their estimate. We in America can believe the best about Japan and see in and for Japan her own noblest possibilities. That is the best way to help Japan to be her best self and to realize what by the grace of God she can become. And Japan can help us by believing the best about us in spite of all the worst that obtrudes itself.

4. By doing right each of us toward our neighbors, we toward Mexico, and Japan toward China. Any sinuous or insincere or selfish activity by either nation is injurious to good-will and right understanding. If Japan or we are not ingenuous and generous and fair toward the nations nearest to us, each of us will suspect that the other may have the same disposition secretly, America toward Japan, and Japan toward America.

7. By carrying out the recommendation of the gathering of friends of Japan and China which met in New York on September 26, 1916, and which voted to ask the President of the United States "to recommend to Congress the creation of a non-partisan commission of not less than five members whose duty it shall be to study the entire problem of relations of America with Japan and with China, and further to recommend to Congress that it invite the govern-

ment of China and the government of Japan each to appoint a similar commission," the American Commission to meet the Commissions of China and Japan in their respective countries.

8. Lastly, in the United States we can help by showing kindness and courtesy to all Japanese visiting or living in America and by multiplying the number of Christian men and women who go out to live in Japan to commend Christianity to the Japanese as a religion which proclaims a God and Father of us all and which can make all nations one.

